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FOREST INSECT AND DISEASE DETECTION SURVEY ON THE LEWIS AND CLARK NATIONAL FOREST, MONTANA

by

Hubert E. Meyer, Biological Technician (Insects)
Forest Insect and Disease Branch

During August an aerial and ground detection survey was conducted on the Jefferson Division of the Lewis and Clark National Forest. The following is a brief synopsis of current insect and disease conditions.

MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE, Dendroctonus ponderosae Hopk.--Mountain pine beetle infestations occurred in several locations on the Lewis and Clark National Forest in 1971. In the Little Belt Mountains, beetle activity appears reduced in the Judith River drainage, but a new spot occurs in Morrisy Coulee in limber pine. Ground checks showed there were no 1971 attacks on Monarch Mountain in Belt Creek although some older kills were observed from the air. Mountain pine beetle activity was detected on private lands adjoining National Forest land on the Smith River near Tenderfoot Creek. The general area of mountain pine beetle infestation has enlarged in the Big and Little Snowy Mountains, but the number of infested trees per acre remains low (Fig. 1).

PINE ENGRAVER, Ips pini (Say).--This insect seems to be of little consequence on the Forest. Some blowdown occurred, especially in the Tenderfoot drainage, which may be attractive to and cause a buildup of Ips.

DOUGLAS-FIR BEETLE, Dendroctonus pseudotsugae Hopk.--This insect often builds in blowdown, and there is an increase in activity of these beetles along the southern portions of the Little Belt Mountains. Ground checks indicated there were trees killed in 1971 in the vicinity of the Newlan Creek guard station and this infestation is expected to continue in 1972 (Fig. 1).

WESTERN SPRUCE BUDWORM, Choristoneura occidentalis Freeman.--A much larger area of "east side" Forests were defoliated by the western spruce budworm in 1971 but this insect did not cause noticeable feeding injury on the Lewis and Clark National Forest.

Figure 1.--Major beetle infestations, 1971

1 - Douglas-fir beetle
4 - Mountain pine beetle